
SECTION: **BREASTFEEDING PROMOTION AND SUPPORT**

SUBJECT: **Breastfeeding Promotion and Support**

ITEM: *Overview*



Purpose Breastfeeding promotion is an essential component of WIC Program services. The Breastfeeding Promotion and Support Overview describes the California WIC Program's position statement on breastfeeding, including vision, mission, and goals for breastfeeding. It provides the foundation for statewide WIC breastfeeding policies that are delineated in additional 600 sections. It also provides the framework for the development of local WIC agency breastfeeding policies and services. This overview is based on the WIC Nutrition Services Standards, recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the WHO/UNICEF Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding.

Position statement on breastfeeding The California WIC Program promotes breastfeeding as the norm for infant feeding, including the sick and premature newborn with rare exceptions. Exclusive breastfeeding is ideal nutrition and sufficient to support optimal growth and development for approximately the first six months after birth. Exclusive breastfeeding is defined as the provision of breast milk only, with no other liquids or solids. Gradual introduction of iron-enriched solid foods in the second half of the first year should complement the breastmilk diet. Breastfeeding should continue through the infant's first birthday, and thereafter for as long as mutually desired. The use of supplemental formula for breastfed infants, particularly in the early postpartum period, should be kept to a minimum as it interferes with the establishment of lactation and is associated with early termination of breastfeeding.

Breastfeeding vision The California WIC Program's vision is that the norm for infant feeding will be exclusive breastfeeding for approximately the first six months of life with continued breastfeeding through the infant's first birthday. Every woman enrolled in the California WIC Program will have the information, resources, and support to breastfeed for at least 12 months, and thereafter for as long as mutually desired.

Breastfeeding mission statement	The California WIC Program promotes, supports and protects exclusive breastfeeding for approximately the first six months of life, and continued breastfeeding for at least the first year.
--	---

Breastfeeding goals and objectives	Given that California exceeds the Healthy People 2010 goals for breastfeeding initiation, the California WIC Program's goals and objectives focus on increasing the amount and duration of breastfeeding.
---	---

The Healthy People 2010 goals for breastfeeding duration are that at least 50 percent of infants are breastfed at six months and at least 25 percent continue to be breastfed at one year. Although the Healthy People 2010 goals do not address exclusive breastfeeding, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends mothers exclusively breastfeed for approximately the first six months of life.

Even though WIC program goals focus on increasing exclusive breastfeeding, and increasing the quantity of breastmilk provided to infants, the objectives focus on what can be tracked by the WIC program, i.e., eliminating and/or reducing the quantity of formula provided by WIC to breastfed infants.

Goal for Exclusive Breastfeeding:

To increase the percentage of infants enrolled in WIC that do not receive formula in the first year of life.

Objective:

The percentage of infants whose infant feeding choice is Breastfeeding (Infant Feeding Choice B) at 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, and 11 months will increase annually.

Goal for Combination Breastfeeding:

To decrease the amount of formula consumed among breastfed WIC infants.

Objective:

The amount of formula provided to combination fed WIC infants (infants fed both breastmilk and formula) at 2, 4, 6 and 11 months of age will decrease annually.

Goal for Any Breastfeeding:

To increase the percentage of infants enrolled in WIC that are receiving any amount of breastmilk in the first year of life.

Objective:

The percentage of WIC infants whose infant feeding choice is formula only (Infant Feeding Choice F) at 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, and 11 months will decrease annually.

**The California
WIC
Programs’
ten steps to
successful
breastfeeding
promotion and
support**

These ten steps provide the framework for local WIC agencies to develop policies and services to support breastfeeding as the norm for infant feeding. These ten steps are based upon recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the WHO/UNICEF Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding and the USDA WIC Nutrition Services Standards.

1. Develop and implement a written breastfeeding policy that recommends exclusive breastfeeding and is routinely communicated to all WIC staff and contracted employees.
2. Train all staff in the necessary skills to implement the breastfeeding policy.
3. Provide culturally appropriate, learner-centered breastfeeding education to ensure participants make an informed infant feeding decision.
4. Provide encouragement and support for mothers to exclusively breastfeed for approximately the first six months and to continue to breastfeed through the infant’s first birthday and thereafter for as long as mutually desired.
5. Create a breastfeeding friendly site/workplace for WIC participants and staff that clearly endorses breastfeeding as the norm for infant feeding.
6. Foster mother-to-mother support for breastfeeding.
7. Identify and refer participants to appropriate breastfeeding resources.
8. Work collaboratively with breastfeeding coalitions, hospitals, healthcare providers, maternal and child public health programs, community groups, employers, and policy makers to ensure breastfeeding messages are consistent and up-to-date and to increase overall support for breastfeeding outside of the WIC environment.
9. Develop annual goals to increase breastfeeding rates and strategies to achieve these goals.
10. Monitor and evaluate breastfeeding promotion and support activities on an on-going basis.